

Chapter Forty-Three

HIGHWAY SYSTEMS

BUREAU OF DESIGN AND ENVIRONMENT MANUAL

Chapter Forty-Three
HIGHWAY SYSTEMS

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CHAPTER FORTY-THREE

HIGHWAY SYSTEMS

The proper application of road design criteria depends in part on the various highway system classifications that have been developed, especially the functional classification system. Chapter 43 discusses these highway systems, which include the:

- functional classification system,
- urban subcategories,
- Federal-aid funding categories,
- highway jurisdictions, and
- the National Truck Network.

43-1 FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

43-1.01 General

43-1.01(a) Definitions

Functional classification is the process by which highways and streets are grouped into classes or systems based on the character of service they are intended to provide.

Urban areas are those places identified by the U.S. Bureau of Census as having a population of 50,000 or more (urbanized areas) or 5,000 or more but less than 50,000 (small urban areas); all places outside of urbanized and small urban areas are rural areas. The urban area boundaries are established by the State, in cooperation with the Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO's) and other appropriate local officials. The boundaries must be approved by FHWA.

43-1.01(b) Background

The *Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA)* of 1991 required that every State functionally reclassify its public roads and streets. The database is also used to identify routes for the National Highway System (NHS), for administering the Federal-aid programs, and for assessing the extent, conditions, and performance of the highway system. Figure 43-1A presents the Department's functional classification terminology.

RURAL	URBAN
Principal Arterial System <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interstates • Other Principal Arterials (OPA) 	Principal Arterial System <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interstates • (Non-Interstate) Freeways and Expressways • Other Principal Arterials (OPA)
Minor Arterials*	Minor Arterials
Collector Roads <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major Collectors* • Minor Collectors 	Collector Streets
Local Roads	Local Streets

* Upgrade rural Minor Arterial to Urban OPA and upgrade rural Major Collector to urban Minor Arterial when these routes enter an urbanized area.

IDOT FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION TERMINOLOGY

Figure 43-1A

43-1.01(c) Relationship to Roadway Design

The functional classification concept is one of the most important determining factors in roadway design. The concept recognizes that the public highway network in Illinois serves two basic and often conflicting functions — access to property and travel mobility. Each road or street will provide varying levels of access and mobility, depending upon its intended service. The overall objective of the functional classification system, when viewed in its entirety, is to yield an optimum balance between its access and mobility functions. When achieved, the benefits to the traveling public will be maximized.

The functional classification system provides the foundation for highway planning functions and the framework for determining the geometric design of individual roadways and streets. Once the function of the highway facility is defined, the designer can select an appropriate design speed, roadway width, roadside safety elements, amenities, and other design values. All of Part V, and much of Part IV, is based upon this systematic concept to determining roadway design.

Before initiating project work, the designer should review the most recent highway functional classification maps for the proposed project in the district or in the Central Office.

43-1.02 General Functional Classification Categories

The following identifies the basic characteristics of the three general categories within the functional classification system:

1. Arterial. Arterial highways are generally characterized by their ability to quickly move relatively large volumes of traffic but often with restricted capacity to serve abutting properties. The arterial system typically provides for high travel speeds and the longest trip movements. The rural and urban arterial systems are connected to provide continuous through movements at approximately the same level of service.
2. Collector. Collector routes are characterized by a relatively even distribution of access and mobility functions. Traffic volumes and speeds are typically lower than those of arterials.
3. Local. All public roads and streets not classified as arterials or collectors are classified as local roads and streets. Local roads and streets are characterized by the many points of direct access to adjacent properties and the relatively minor value in accommodating mobility. Speeds and volumes are usually low and trip distances short.

The following sections more explicitly describe the characteristics of these three general categories for rural and urban areas.

43-1.03 Rural Functional Classification Categories

43-1.03(a) Principal Arterial System

The rural principal arterial system provides connections between the major urban areas and OPA's and provides a level of service suitable for Statewide or interstate travel. The system provides integrated, continuous movements without the need for stub connections. The rural principal arterial system is divided into the following subcategories:

1. Interstates. The Interstate system consists of a connected rural network of continuous routes designated as part of the National System of Interstate and Defense Highways. They are fully access controlled and constructed for higher design speeds. All Interstates are required components of the National Highway System (NHS) (see Section 43-3).
2. Other Principal Arterials (OPA's). These facilities consist of a connected rural network of continuous routes having the following designations and characteristics:
 - serve to interconnect various regions of the State not served by the Interstate system with either a non-Interstate freeway, expressway (partial access control), or high-type two-lane highway;

- should connect with routes of the same functional classification in adjacent states;
- should provide a design with high overall travel speeds and with minimum interference to through movements; and
- could be part of the National Highway System (NHS); however, note that not all OPA's are on the NHS (see Section 43-3).

43-1.03(b) Minor Arterials

Rural minor arterials should form a network having the following characteristics:

- should form an integrated network of routes connecting to the OPA's and should provide interregional or intercounty service. Stub sections are seldom justified;
- should interconnect and serve areas of the State not served by the principal arterial system;
- should connect with routes of the same function in adjacent states;
- are located at such intervals to provide an average spacing of approximately 12 miles – 15 miles (20 km - 25 km) between all arterial routes;
- should serve virtually all county seats and small towns with populations of 1,000 or more or equivalent type traffic generators; and
- should provide a design with relatively high overall travel speeds with minimum interference to through movements. Partial access control should be considered and investigated on these routes as they approach urbanized areas.

43-1.03(c) Collector Roads

The rural collector road system generally includes those routes where the predominant travel distances are shorter than trips on arterial routes but greater than the short trips characteristic of the local road system. To more clearly define the characteristics of rural collector roads, these facilities have been subdivided into two separate functional classifications:

1. Major Collectors. These are characterized as follows:
 - provide service to any county seats not on an arterial route;

- serve the more important intracounty or intraregional travel corridors not served by higher route classifications;
- serve larger towns not directly served by higher route classifications nor other traffic generators of equivalent intracounty importance. Such routes link nearby larger cities or other routes of higher classification;
- serve most small towns with populations of 500 or more. Such small towns are either served by a major collector or higher classified route;
- form an integrated network; however, stub sections are not uncommon. Consolidated school districts, shipping points, recreational areas, or other equivalent traffic generators can be used to justify the inclusion of such stubs in this classification;
- are located at intervals with an average spacing between collectors and other routes with higher classifications of approximately 6 miles – 10 miles (10 km – 15 km); and
- provide all-weather service for reliable and safe travel, considering both access and mobility.

2. Minor Collectors. These are characterized as follows:

- provide service to any remaining small communities with populations of 100 or more and which are not served by a higher classified route;
- are located at intervals, consistent with population density, to collect traffic from local roads and to connect all developed areas within a reasonable distance from a collector route. The average spacing between minor collectors and other routes with higher classifications should be approximately 3 miles – 6 miles (5 km – 10 km);
- include more stub sections than the major collector classification; and
- are designed for relatively reliable and year-around safe travel, with more emphasis on property access than mobility.

Projects for improvements on roads with a rural minor collector functional classification are not eligible for Surface Transportation Program (STP) funds.

43-1.03(d) Local Roads

The roads functionally classified as rural local roads generally have the following characteristics:

- constitute the rural mileage not designated as part of higher classifications;
- serve primarily to provide access to abutting property and connections to higher classified routes;
- provide service to motorists who travel relatively short distances as compared to collectors or other higher classified routes;
- commonly include stub sections; and
- reflect minimal design criteria with primary consideration to access needs.

Projects for improvements on roads with a rural local road functional classification are not eligible for Surface Transportation Program (STP) funds.

43-1.04 Urban Functional Classification Categories**43-1.04(a) Principal Arterial System**

In general, the urban principal arterial system carries the highest traffic volumes and accommodates the greatest trip lengths. Because of the nature of the travel served by this system, almost all fully and partially access-controlled facilities will be part of the principal arterial system. However, this system is not restricted to access-controlled routes. To preserve the identification of access-controlled facilities, the principal arterial system is segregated as follows:

1. Interstates. The Interstate system consists of a connected urban network of continuous routes designated as part of the National System of Interstate and Defense Highways. They are fully access controlled and constructed for higher design speeds. All Interstates are required components of the National Highway System (NHS) (see Section 43-3).
2. (Non-Interstate) Freeways and Expressways. (Non-Interstate) freeways and expressways may be connecting links in the urban area, and they may be extensions of rural OPA's. These routes may traverse the urban area from one boundary to another or may simply connect to another connecting link. Also (Non-Interstate) freeways and expressways may provide access to circumferential routes around the city or provide links to the central city. Additional links may be necessary to provide system continuity in urbanized areas with a population greater than 50,000.

(Non-Interstate) freeways and expressways consist of facilities that have the following general characteristics:

- should serve traffic coming from rural other principal arterials or other traffic with interregional demand;
 - should provide continuity within the urban area and for all rural freeways and expressways which intercept the urban boundary;
 - serve the major economic activity centers of an urban area, the highest traffic volume corridors, or the longest regional and intraurban trips; and
 - should carry a high proportion of the total urban area travel on a minimum of mileage (kilometers) and should serve the major portion of trips entering and leaving the urban area and the majority of through movements desiring to bypass the central city.
3. Other Principal Arterials. These routes consist of a connected urban network of continuous routes having the following designations and characteristics:
- provide service to, through, or around urban areas from rural minor arterial routes and may be connecting links;
 - serve generally as an extension of a rural minor arterial highway and could be an expressway design, a major two-way city street, or a one-way couple system;
 - may warrant management of access to the highway;
 - serve long distance traffic within a city by connecting major regional activity centers not served by connecting links;
 - in urbanized areas (50,000 population or greater), should provide for significant urban and suburban travel demands. Such trips would be between central business districts and outlying residential areas, between major inner city communities, or between major suburban centers;
 - in urbanized areas, are located at spacings which are closely related to the trip-end density characteristics of specific portions of the urban area. The spacing may vary from 1 mile (1.5 km) between routes in the densely developed central business district areas to 6 miles (10 km) or more in the sparsely developed urban fringes;
 - in smaller urban areas (under 50,000 but greater than 5,000 population), may be limited in the number and extent of routes. The importance of such routes is primarily to serve the central business district and to accommodate through travel at an appropriate level of service;

- could be part of the National Highway System (NHS) (see Section 43-3) and/or a Strategic Regional Arterial (SRA) route in District 1 (see Chapter 46); however, it should be noted that not all OPA's are on the NHS; and
- provide for an integrated network serving the entire urban area.

43-1.04(b) Minor Arterials

When compared to the principal arterial system, urban minor arterials may provide lower travel speeds and accommodate shorter trip lengths and lower traffic volumes, but they provide more access to property. These routes have the following general characteristics:

- interconnect and supplement the urban principal arterial system;
- provide service for trips of moderate length and at a somewhat lower level of mobility than urban principal arterial routes;
- may carry local bus routes and provide intracommunity continuity (but will not, for example, penetrate neighborhoods);
- may be urban extensions of rural major collector routes; and
- considered together with all urban arterial routes, are located from 2 miles – 3 miles (3 km to 5 km) between routes in suburban fringes and as close as 1 mile (1.5 km) in fully developed areas. Within the central business district, a spacing of 650 ft to ½ mile (200 m to 800 m) is typical.

43-1.04(c) Collector Streets

In urban areas, collector streets serve as intermediate links between the arterial system and points of origin and destination. These facilities typically have the following characteristics:

- provide both access and traffic circulation within residential neighborhoods and commercial and industrial areas;
- may penetrate residential neighborhoods or commercial/industrial areas to collect and distribute trips to and from the arterial system;
- in the central business district, may include the streets which are not classified as arterials;
- have spacing of routes dependent on the density of development. In fully developed areas, spacing together with higher classifications should provide approximately ½ mile

(800 m) between routes and, within the central business district, a spacing of 650 ft to ½ mile (200 m to 800 m); and

- may be urban extensions of rural minor collector routes.

43-1.04(d) Local Streets

The streets functionally classified as urban local streets generally have the following characteristics:

- constitute the urban mileage (kilometers) not designated as part of a higher classification;
- serve primarily to provide direct access to abutting land and higher order systems;
- offer the lowest level of mobility and usually contain no bus routes; and
- discourage through traffic movements.

Projects for improvements on streets with an urban local street functional classification are not eligible for Surface Transportation Program (STP) funds.

43-1.05 Illinois System

The percent of miles (kilometers) traveled nationally in each category is documented in the US DOT/Federal Highway Administration manual *Highway Functional Classification — Concepts, Criteria and Procedures*. Current Illinois statistics are published annually in *Illinois Travel Statistics*. In addition, roadway information is collected on all public highways and is stored on computer files as documented in the *Roadway Information and Procedure Manual*. The Illinois Roadway Information System (IRIS) is used to compile information for two principal reasons:

- to determine if a specific project is eligible for a certain type of funding, and
- to assist in prioritizing highway improvement needs.

43-2 URBAN SUBCATEGORIES

43-2.01 General

The functional classification system described in Section 43-1 is divided into urban and rural categories. However, the “urban” designation is not sufficiently specific to determine the appropriate roadway design. The urban design classification is divided into “suburban” and “urban” based on the extent of roadside development. These categories are further subdivided as discussed in the following sections. This refinement to the highway design process allows the project to be tailored to the constraints of the surrounding environment. The following briefly discusses these urban subcategories.

43-2.02 Urban

Urban areas are those places identified by the U.S. Bureau of Census having a population of 5,000 or more. For design purposes, urban areas are further subdivided as follows:

1. Central Business Districts (CBD). On streets in the CBD or downtown area, abutting building development often prohibits space for off-street parking and entrances for individual businesses. Right-of-way is usually very limited. The streets may include high-density commercial or residential development (e.g., apartment complexes, row houses). Access to property is the primary function of the street network in CBD's. The designer often must select the cross-sectional criteria that will fit into the existing right-of-way. Pedestrian and bicycle considerations may be as important as vehicular considerations, especially at intersections.

Because of the high density of development in CBD areas, the distinction between the functional classes (local, collector, arterial) becomes less significant in design. The primary distinction among the three functional classes is often the relative traffic volumes and, therefore, the number of lanes needed. As many as half of the intersections may be signalized; posted speed limits typically range between 25 mph and 30 mph.

2. Fringe Area/Outlying Business District (FRNG/OBD). These areas generally have off-street parking and driveway entrances that usually are quite numerous. Right-of-way may be restricted and will typically limit the practical options for roadway improvements. The extent of roadside development will have a significant impact on the selected speeds of drivers. Pedestrian and bicycle activity is common and warrants significant consideration in design.

Local and collector streets in FRNG/OBD areas typically have posted speed limits between 30 mph and 45 mph. The frequency of signalized intersections is substantially higher than in suburban areas. An arterial in FRNG/OBD areas will often have strip commercial development along its roadside, and posted speed limits will range between 40 mph and 45 mph.

43-2.03 Suburban

These areas connote a degree of development greater than that of a rural area but less than that of an urban area. The predominant character of the surrounding environment is usually residential, but it may also include a considerable number of commercial establishments and a few industrial parks. On suburban roads and streets, drivers usually have considerable freedom of maneuverability; nonetheless, they must devote some of their attention to entering and exiting vehicles. Roadside development is characterized by low to moderate density. Pedestrian and bicycle activity is usually not a design factor. Right-of-way may be available for roadway improvements.

Local and collector streets in suburban areas are typically located in residential areas but may also serve a commercial area. Posted speed limits typically range between 30 mph and 45 mph. The majority of intersections will have stop or yield control, but there will be an occasional traffic signal. A typical suburban arterial will have strip commercial development and perhaps a few residential properties. Posted speed limits usually range between 35 mph and 50 mph, and there will be a few signalized intersections along the arterial.

Suburban areas are further divided into two subclassifications (closed and open). For definition, the area adjacent to urban conditions is noted as “closed suburban” and the area adjacent to rural conditions as “open suburban.” Some judgment is necessary to define the boundaries between these two suburban subclassifications, as described below.

43-2.03(a) Closed Suburban

Closed suburban areas will generally follow urban policies for capacity and lane requirements and will generally have the following characteristics:

- combination of intermittent strip development, intermittent street network, and open-space segments;
- some high-volume traffic generators;
- isolated signalized intersections;
- some two-way and four-way stop-controlled intersections;
- outside curb and gutter cross sections with a closed drainage system;
- average posted speeds of 35 mph to 45 mph;

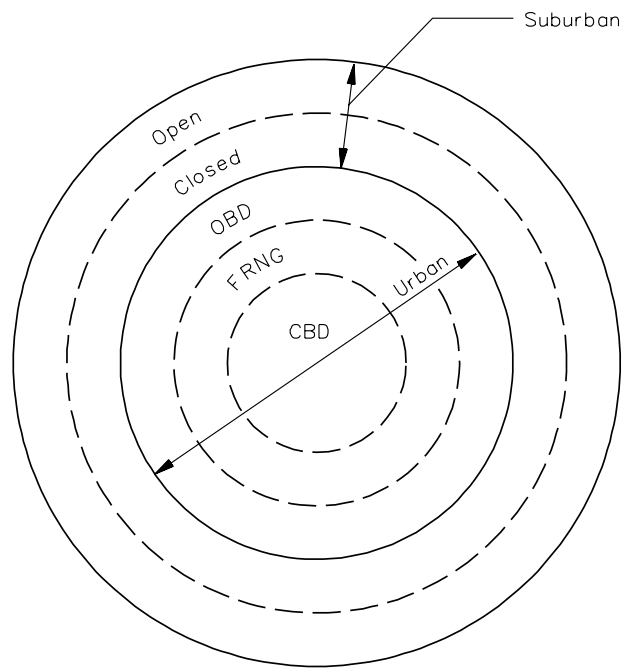
- high potential for considerable land development within approximately five years following the highway improvement; and
- adherence to restricted spacing for route access.

43-2.03(b) Open Suburban

Open suburban designs will generally follow the rural policies for capacity purposes and lane requirements and will generally have the following characteristics:

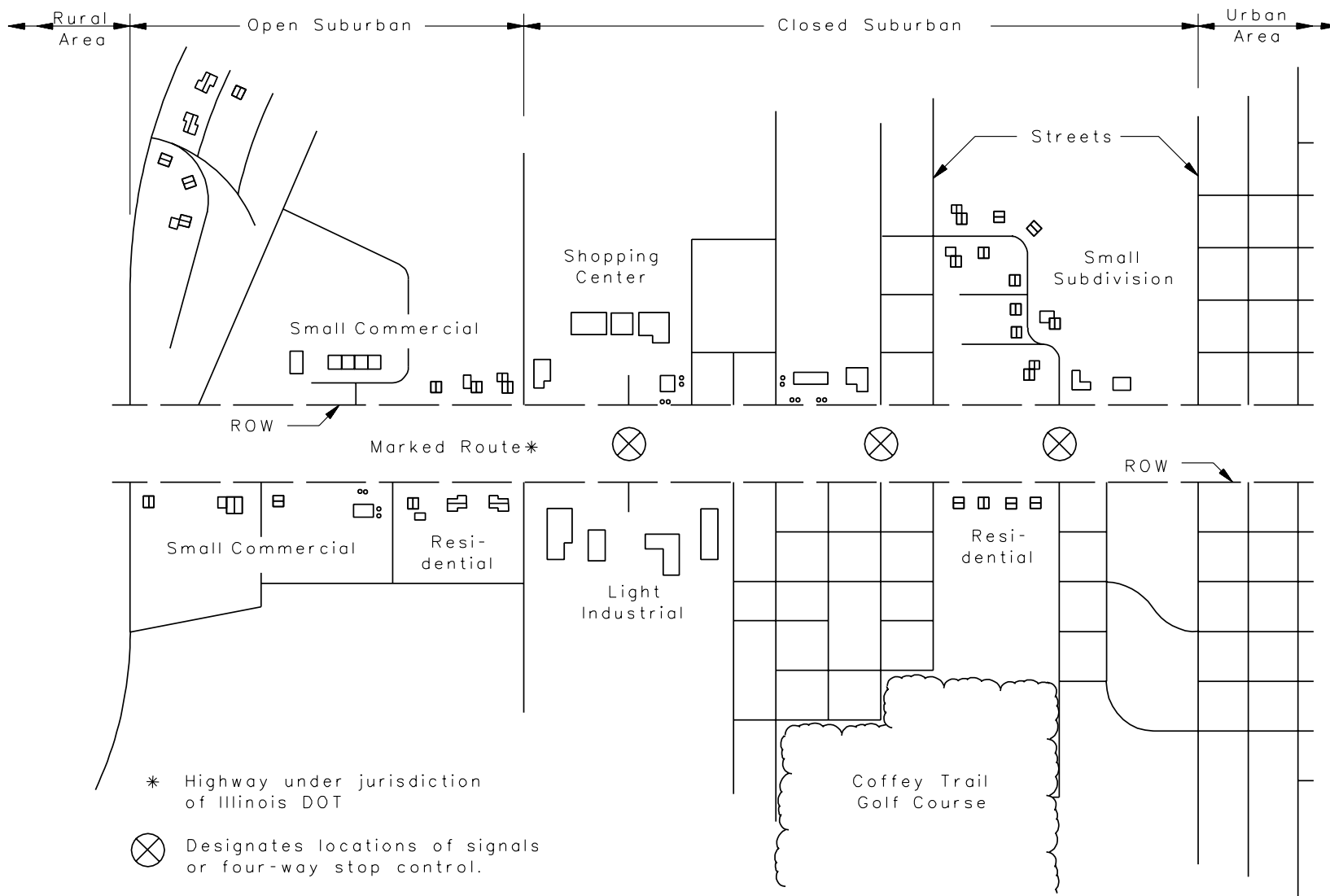
- no established street network;
- local road intersections spaced at approximately 1320 ft – 1600 ft (400 m – 500 m) apart;
- some residential and small commercial properties;
- generally free-flowing traffic on mainline roadways;
- average posted speeds of 45 mph to 50 mph;
- with depressed medians, the cross section usually includes outside shoulders and outside ditch drainage;
- good potential for considerable land development within about 10 to 15 years following the highway improvement; and
- adherence to ¼ mile (400 m) spacing for route access.

Figure 43-2A presents the relationship between urban and suburban subcategories for design. Figure 43-2B schematically illustrates the general type of cultural development and roadway networks within suburban areas.



**URBAN AND SUBURBAN CATEGORIES
(For Design)**

Figure 43-2A



SUBURBAN AREAS
Figure 43-2B

43-3 FEDERAL-AID FUNDING CATEGORIES

There are three basic Federal-aid funding categories:

- the National Highway System (NHS),
- the Interstate System, and
- the Surface Transportation Program (STP).

Funding options for projects or improvements should be identified because some roadway functional classification categories are not eligible to receive STP funding (e.g., all rural and urban local roads and streets).

43-3.01 National Highway System

The National Highway System (NHS) is a network of principal arterial routes identified as essential for international, interstate, and regional commerce and travel, national defense, and the transfer of people and goods to and from major intermodal facilities. It consists of selected Other Principal Arterials, the Strategic Highway Network (STRAHNET), major STRAHNET connectors, and selected major intermodal connectors. The NHS represents approximately 4% - 5% of the total public road mileage in the United States. Specifically, the NHS includes the following subsystems (note that in a few cases a specific highway route may be on more than one subsystem):

1. Interstate. The current Interstate system of highways retains its separate identity within the NHS. There are also provisions to add mileage to the existing Interstate subsystem.
2. (Selected) Other Principal Arterials (OPA). These are selected highways in rural and urban areas that provide access between an arterial and a major port, airport, public transportation facility, or other intermodal transportation facility.
3. Strategic Highway Network (STRAHNET). This is a network of highways that are important to the United States' strategic defense policy and which provide defense access, continuity, and emergency capabilities for defense purposes. In Illinois, the STRAHNET is the entire marked Interstate system (including toll facilities marked as Interstate routes).
4. Major Strategic Highway Network (STRAHNET) Connectors. These are roads and highways that provide access between major military installations and highways that are part of the Strategic Highway Network (Interstate system).
5. Major Intermodal Connectors. These are selected streets and highways (primarily in urban areas) that provide access between another NHS designated route (Interstate or OPA) and a designated major port, airport, public transportation facility, freight facility, or other intermodal transportation facility.

The NHS (with the exception of the major intermodal connectors) was approved by the *National Highway System Designation Act* in 1995. As of January 1, 1997, the major intermodal connectors are pending formal approval.

To properly manage the NHS, ISTEA initially mandated that each State highway agency develop and implement several management systems and one monitoring system for those facilities on the NHS. These include management systems for pavements, bridges, traffic congestion, safety, public transportation facilities/equipment, traffic monitoring, and intermodal transportation facilities/systems. However, the NHS Act of 1995 has relaxed the requirements for these management systems.

43-3.02 Surface Transportation Program

The Surface Transportation Program (STP) is a block-grant program that provides Federal funds for any public road not functionally classified as a rural minor collector or a rural or urban local road/street. The basic objective of the STP is to provide Federal-aid for improvements to facilities not considered to have significant national importance and to minimize the Federal requirements for funding eligibility. The Federal funds allocated to the STP are comparable to those funds previously designated for use on the former Federal-aid primary, Federal-aid urban, and Federal-aid secondary systems. The functional classification of a route is a major factor in determining eligibility for Federal-aid. In addition, bridge projects are eligible for STP funds on any public road. Transit capital projects are also eligible under the STP program.

43-3.03 Highway Bridge Replacement and Rehabilitation Program (HBRRP)

Because of the nationwide emphasis on bridges, the Highway Bridge Replacement and Rehabilitation Program (HBRRP) has retained its separate identity within the Federal-aid program. HBRRP funds are eligible for work on any bridge on any public road regardless of its functional classification, if the eligibility criteria of the HBRR Program (23 USC 144) are met.

43-4 HIGHWAY JURISDICTIONS

The network of public highway and streets in Illinois has been divided into several jurisdictional systems — the State, County, Municipal, and Township/Road District highway systems. Jurisdiction is defined as the authority and obligation to administer, control, construct, maintain, and operate a highway subject to the provisions of the *Illinois Highway Code*.

Jurisdictional transfers are usually initiated by an agency that identifies a need for an improvement of a specific roadway or structure; however, certain transfers of jurisdiction can occur without an improvement. Negotiations for a jurisdictional transfer of State unmarked routes should begin when an improvement is being formulated and should be documented with a letter of intent (accepting or refusing the jurisdictional transfer) and signed by the local agency. Subsequently, a Joint Agreement with all affected agencies (State, county, and/or municipality) must be executed before the jurisdictional transfer occurs. For more information, refer to Section 14 of the Office of Planning and Programming's "Multi-Year Guidelines" (updated annually), the Division of Highways' publication *Jurisdictional Transfer Guidelines for Highways and Street Systems*, and Chapter 5 of the *BDE Manual*.

43-4.01 State Highway System

The State highway system consists of all highways under the jurisdiction of the Illinois Department of Transportation. This system contains all Interstate highways, all other marked State and US routes, and some unmarked routes. In general, the marked routes are the most important highways in the State, carry the greatest traffic volumes, and operate at the highest speeds. The Department uses either a combination of Federal funds and State funds or State-only funds for improvements on the State highway system.

43-4.02 County Road System

The county governments are responsible for all roads within their boundaries that are not on the State or township/road district highway systems and are not the responsibility of the incorporated municipalities within the county. IDOT is responsible for administering Federal funds that are available for highway improvements on eligible county routes and the rehabilitation of bridges carrying county roads over the State system. The maintenance responsibilities for these structures can vary and depends on the terms of the structure maintenance agreement.

43-4.03 Municipal Street System

The municipal system includes public roads and streets within the corporate limits of municipalities, except those on the Federal, State, county and toll highway systems. The extension of these routes outside the corporate limits, but still within an urbanized or small

urban area, is the responsibility of the county. IDOT is responsible for administering Federal funds that are available for improvements on eligible municipal streets.

43-4.04 Township/Road District System

The township/road district system consists of all remaining rural (outside corporate limits and outside urban area boundaries) routes, excluding other jurisdictions described in Section 43-4.05.

43-4.05 Other Systems

These include other private routes under the jurisdiction of other State agencies (e.g., Illinois Department of Natural Resources), Federal agencies, and the toll authorities or toll commissions. A route may also have joint jurisdictional responsibility (e.g., county and State).

43-5 NATIONAL TRUCK NETWORK**43-5.01 National Legislation**

The Surface Transportation Assistance Act (STAA) of 1982 required the U.S. Secretary of Transportation, in cooperation with the State highway agencies, to designate a national network of highways to allow the passage of trucks of specified minimum dimensions and weight. The objective of the STAA was to promote uniformity throughout the nation for legal truck sizes and weights on a National Truck Network. The Network includes all Interstate highways and significant portions of the former Federal-aid primary system (before the 1991 ISTEA) built to accommodate large-truck travel. In addition, the STAA required that “reasonable access” be provided along other designated routes for STAA vehicles to travel from the National Truck Network to terminals and to facilities for food, fuel, repair, and rest and, for household goods carriers, to points of loading and unloading.

43-5.02 State Legislation

As a result of STAA, the Illinois legislature passed Public Act 83-12, which permits larger and heavier trucks on Illinois highways. As a result, a “Designated State Truck Route System for Large Vehicles and Combinations” was developed and implemented. This system governs the mobility and accessibility of these vehicles and is illustrated on a State map issued annually by the Central Bureau of Operations.

In 1995, additional State legislation was passed governing the length of tractor/semitrailer units. This legislation allows even longer trucks on most State highways. Refer to Section 36-1 for the critical design vehicles corresponding to the appropriate truck route classes within the Designated State Truck Route System.

